

Economic Development Division

2021



ANNUAL REPORT



DIVISION OVERVIEW

What a year for Colorado Springs! 2021 started in the grips of the COVID 19 pandemic, and we were experiencing a strangely bifurcated economy. On one hand, private sector investment in business expansions was rampant, and commercial and residential development and construction were at record levels. While health mandated lockdowns and restrictions temporarily changed the way we lived, many workers were able to work remotely and innovate, keeping productivity and earnings at high levels. That productivity, combined with large amounts of federal dollars infused into the economy, resulted in significant spending on items such as new housing, new automobiles, and financial assets.

On the other hand, certain businesses and industries were heavily impacted by COVID 19, such as restaurants, bars, hotels, sports, performance, and event venues. These businesses were hampered by lingering shutdowns and consumers nervous about attending large gatherings. Even after the health-related restrictions began to ease, these businesses struggled to find employees, as many workers were receiving generous unemployment benefits and were incentivized not to work.

Despite the challenges, **the Colorado Springs economy proved to be one of the most resilient in the nation.** Confidence in the local economy resulted in huge bets on the future of Colorado Springs, manifested by booming construction and significant job creation. Colorado Springs led the state in recovering all jobs lost to the pandemic. In fact, we experienced net job growth!

With 2021 behind us the future looks bright. The city will continue to experience the transformation of our downtown. The explosion of investment will continue throughout the city, particularly in high growth corridors, such as Interquest and Northgate. Companies will expand and add jobs.

The Economic Development Division will continue its work in support of private sector investment, job and wealth creation, economic opportunity for all, and to create an even greater city with a business-friendly environment and an exceptional quality of life.

Bob Cope
Economic Development Officer



Initiatives

COVID-19 BUSINESS RECOVERY

Coming out of a year of uncertainty, 2021 saw a resurgence to the health of our business climate, with focused efforts and determination to create a resilient city. Some of those efforts include a risk assessment study, the forming of the Regional Recovery Council – with partners at El Paso County Health and other regional economic development partners, regulation relief – including outdoor dining and liquor sales, and grants and loans to aid local businesses. The City of Colorado Springs Economic Development Division was utilized as a source of information for a facet of resources, to include state & federal outreach.



OPEN

Regional Recovery Council and 5 Star Certification

In February, the regional 5 Star Certification program launched with Economic Development staff assistance. The team continued to serve on the Regional Recovery Council and Small Business & Entrepreneurship sub-committee, and worked with public health to clarify and advocate for enhanced reopening/restrictions information to assist businesses.

Initiatives *...Continued*

SOUTHEAST COLORADO SPRINGS

PROMOTING COMMUNITY VOICES AND FACILITATING INVESTMENT FOR A HEALTHY SOUTHEAST ECONOMY



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The Southeast Economic Vitality Regional Leadership group continues to convene every quarter to leverage their collective influence to help champion the top economic vitality initiatives in Southeast COS. The team maintains its priority of catalytic visible wins for Southeast Colorado Springs. Two 2021 economic development projects of note include:

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT TRUST (CIT)



The Economic Development team is actively supporting efforts to ensure the success of the Community Investment Trust (CIT). CIT is an inclusive wealth-building path for low-income families to invest in commercial real estate to grow funds for the future. It moves residents from owing to owning. A commercial retail property has been identified and is soon to be under contract.

The Economic Development team is also supporting efforts to ensure the successful start of the Family Success Center (FSC), including a \$1.5 million grant from the city to repurpose Pikes Peak Elementary School into a space of opportunities. The Pikes Peak United Way FSC will be a place where Southeast COS residents of all ages can come for education, counseling, mentoring, social services, tutoring, and more. In addition, it will serve as a meeting place for residents.

FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER (FSC)



POSITIVE IMPACT

The City of Colorado Springs has placed high priority on several projects in the Southeast area, including the \$8.5 million investment in Panorama Park and \$160 million in road and bridge projects.

Initiatives *...Continued*

Economic Development is proud to support organizations that are providing resources, connections, and advocacy for minority and women-owned businesses.



COLORADO SPRINGS
HISPANIC BUSINESS
COUNCIL



SOUTHERN COLORADO
WOMEN'S CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

ACCOLADES

BROWNFIELDS REVITALIZATION



The Cities of Colorado Springs and Fountain, Colorado Springs Utilities, and School District 11's *Brownfields Coalition* received a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant in 2019 to support revitalization of brownfields — properties that have been, or may be perceived to have been, affected environmentally. In 2021 staff supported the Public Works department and partners to host a second public engagement meeting, supported outreach efforts, and tracked project progress.

To date, five Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) have been completed or are in progress. Nine Phase II ESAs have been completed or are in progress. Four reuse planning projects are underway. Priority sites for Colorado Springs are within the Shooks Run and Fountain Creek corridor focus areas.



STRATEGIC PLAN: MEASURING UP

2020-2024 Strategic Plan

The City of Colorado Springs' Strategic plan sets forth City priorities and commitments from 2020 to 2024. The plan was developed with broad community input and includes four main goals. The Economic Development Division's three key objectives for 2021 are outlined under the City's **Promoting Job Creation** goal.

1

RESPONSIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE FOR JOB CREATION

ENCOURAGE PRIMARY JOBS IN TARGET INDUSTRIES THROUGH COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS, LEVERAGING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS, AND ENSURING A RESPONSIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE TO SUPPORT COMPANY ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION.



1. Economic Development Agreements
2. Colorado Procurement Technical Assistance
3. UCCS Economic Forum
4. Rapid Response
5. Foreign Trade Zone and International Biz
6. Opportunity Zones
7. Summit Economics - Economic & Fiscal Impacts
8. Issue Resolution

2

GROW TOURISM IN OLYMPIC CITY USA

ADVANCE THE OLYMPIC CITY USA BRAND AND TOURISM INDUSTRY BY SUPPORTING PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE EFFORTS IN AND NEAR DOWNTOWN, CATALYTIC PROJECTS (CITY FOR CHAMPIONS, ETC.), AND KEY EVENTS THAT ATTRACT VISITORS TO THE REGION



1. RTA Advisory Board
2. Urban Renewal Authority
3. Park Union Development & Collaboration
4. U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum
5. Hybl Sports Medicine and Performance Center
6. Air Force Academy Visitor Center
7. Robson Arena
8. Weidner Field
9. Downtown Colorado Inc.

3

ENHANCE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A ROBUST INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM THAT SUPPORTS ENTREPRENEURS, STARTUP COMPANIES, AND SMALL BUSINESSES THAT DIVERSIFY OUR REGIONAL ECONOMY.



1. Hispanic Business Council
2. Southern Colorado Women's Chamber
3. COSOpenForBiz.com
4. Industry Roadmaps
5. Exponential Impact
6. La Vida Sponsorship
7. Night of Excellence Event
8. Southeast Economic Vitality



RAPID RESPONSE


Amazon Fulfillment Center at Peak Innovation Park

The City's Rapid Response program is managed by the Economic Development Division to provide qualifying primary employers and projects with expedited review and approval of land use applications and building permits. Rapid Response is valuable in that it reduces the time by half of what it generally takes for plans to move through the approval process. The Rapid Response team includes every regulatory agency that participates in plan review and approval.

2021 RAPID RESPONSE PROJECT IMPACTS

19 
Projects Started

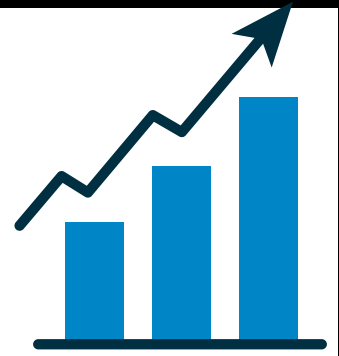
 **\$893.5
MILLION**
Private Investment

2,559 
New Jobs Created

 **2.4+ MILLION**
Square Feet Constructed/Renovated

 **2,570**
Jobs Retained

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS



The Economic Development Division offers a number of programs to assist businesses in locating or expanding within the city limits. Since 2017, businesses are no longer required to pay a Business Personal Property Tax. Additionally, Economic Development offers a number of performance-based incentives that can be customized specifically for various business categories, including:

1. *Sales and Use Tax Rebates on Construction Materials*
2. *Sales and Use Tax Rebates on the Purchase of Machinery, Equipment & Business Personal Property*
3. *Business Personal Property Tax Mill Levy Credit*

2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT IMPACTS

\$ 24.2 MILLION

Private Investment



83



New Jobs
Created

\$1.6 MILLION

Projected Net New

City Revenue



542

Jobs Retained



**DELIVERING
INNOVATIVE
SCIENCE-BASED
SOLUTIONS**



City for Champions highlights five unique and extraordinary venues that will strengthen and diversify the economic impact of our regional and state visitor attractions.

CITY FOR CHAMPIONS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

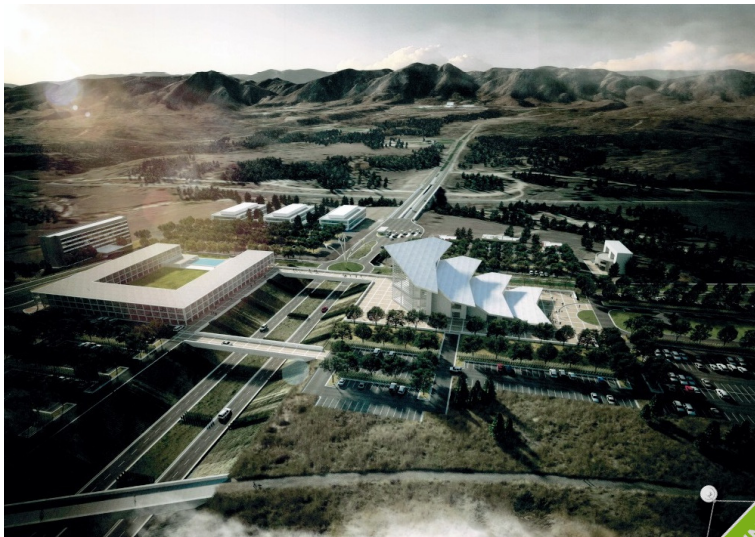


US OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC MUSEUM

Despite travel disruptions during the pandemic, the visitor numbers at the US Olympic and Paralympic Museum continued to climb in 2021, setting an all-time attendance record on July 30th. The museum was featured during a five-minute spotlight segment on *CBS Morning News*, gaining even more coveted international attention. The USOPM continues to draw crowds for events during the off-season by hosting a variety of events. The Hall of Fame induction process and the 2022 Summer Olympics will usher in new visitors.

UCCS SPORTS MEDICINE & PERFORMANCE CENTER

The Hybl Sports Medicine and Performance Center at UCCS has been busy adding to their elite team of medical professionals. New specialties include exercise-induced asthma and vocal cord dysfunction, interventional cardiology, extreme environment athletics, and metabolic assessment. They also house professional retail bicycle fitting and golf swing analysis services for elite and amateur athletes.



US AIR FORCE ACADEMY GATEWAY VISITOR CENTER

Conveniently located off I-25 and outside the security entrance, this iconic development will be home to the new Visitor Center, showcasing the dynamic history of the US Air Force Academy, as well as house a Colorado Welcome Center.

An adjacent world-class hotel and conference center will bring a variety of elite visitors to the Pikes Peak region. Groundbreaking planned for March 2022.



CITY FOR CHAMPIONS

...Continued

SPORTS AND EVENTS CENTER

As part of the City for Champions initiative, two downtown sports venues - one outdoor and one indoor - together make up the Colorado Sports and Events Center. Both locations are fully open, entertaining sports enthusiasts, community members, and visitors from all walks of life. These multi-functional facilities hosted a variety of events all year long.



WEIDNER FIELD

Weidner Field held its first soccer game April 24, 2021 to an exuberant crowd of spectators. The beautiful downtown complex successfully hosted over 62 events in 2021, to include Premier LaCrosse, NCAA, music concerts, CHSAA soccer finals, brew fests, and holiday light shows. Next on the horizon is the completion of the mixed-use apartment and retail development located parallel to the facility, bringing even more vibrancy and economic vitality to the downtown corridor.

ROBSON ARENA

Robson Arena hosted its first hockey game on October 2, 2021. All home game season tickets were sold out, creating synergy and excitement at the beautiful and historic Colorado College campus, as well as creating positive economic impacts for Colorado Springs travel and service industries. The Arena also hosted 63 core community events, as well as 22 student-focused activities.



A wide-angle, low-perspective shot of a two-lane asphalt road stretching straight into the distance. The road has a dashed yellow center line and solid white edge lines. The surrounding landscape is a dry, arid desert with sparse, low-lying yellow and brown shrubs. In the far distance, a range of blue mountains is visible under a clear, bright blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of vastness and isolation.

3 NEW BIZ ROADMAPS

[illegible]

- Personal Services
- Restaurants and Cafes
- Breweries

8,900

COLORADO SPRINGS

OPEN

(for business)

COSOPENFORBIZ.COM

COSSBA

The Colorado Springs for Small Business Advancement team continued its efforts in 2021, expanding the number of industry specific roadmaps to include personal services, brewery, general retail marketing, and funding on the COSOpenForBiz.com site.



PROJECTS TO NOTE

OUTLOOK BRIARGATE



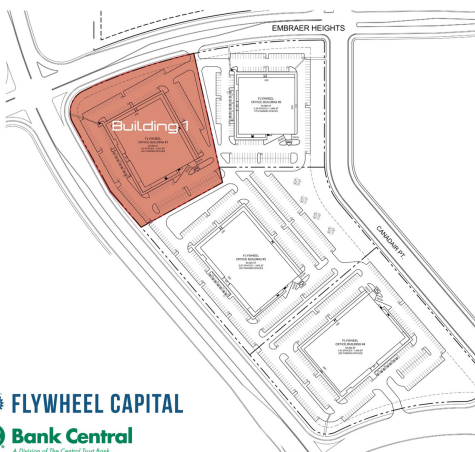
rebusinessonline.com

Evergreen Devco purchased the Sears building at Chapel Hills Mall, redeveloping the vacant store property into a 300-unit apartment complex (Outlook Briargate).

Construction began in July, with the first units available for rent in 2022.

IFLY

Slated to open in 2022, iFLY's state-of-the-art wind tunnels are designed to provide a safe flight experience, memories that will last a lifetime, and a unique story to tell. Beginners to seasoned pros, people of all shapes, sizes and abilities can take flight and have the time of their lives.



FLYWHEEL

Flywheel Capital plans to develop a \$45 million 210,000 square foot Peak Technology Campus in the heart of Colorado Springs' Peak Innovation Park, a 900-acre master-planned business park and designated Qualified Opportunity Zone at the entrance to the Colorado Springs airport. The Peak Technology Campus will be built in four phases, with the second phase's anticipated construction starting late 2022.

MEET THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM

MISSION

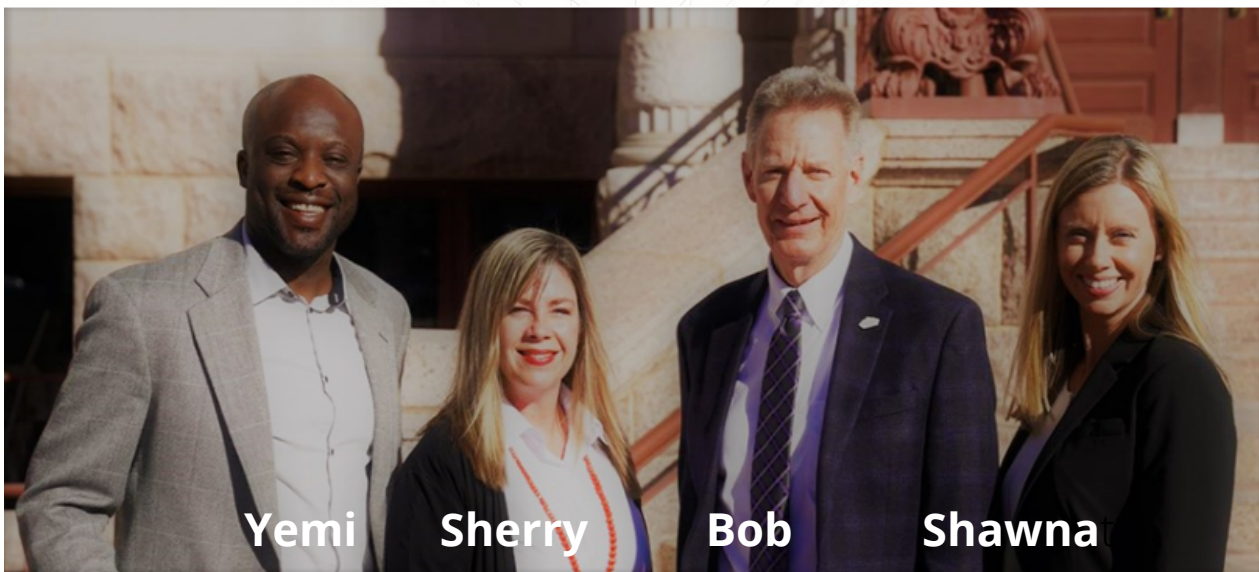
The City of Colorado Springs Economic Development Division is committed to promoting private sector investment, job and wealth creation, and to continuing in collaboration with partners across the region to grow economic opportunity and attract a diverse economic base in Olympic City USA.

WHAT WE DO

From economic development agreement incentives and re/development support, to small business assistance, our team is available to serve your business development needs. Get in touch by contacting us at 719-385-6881 or sherry.hoffman@coloradosprings.gov.

TEAM

- Bob Cope, Economic Development Officer
- Shawna Lippert, Senior Economic Development Specialist
- Yemi Mobolade, Small Business Development Administrator
- Sherry Hoffman, Economic Development Specialist





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